

# The Harvester

## Preparing Souls

## To Serve The Lord



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# The "Fear of the LORD" And Sexual Relationships

By Rick Kenyon

One of the most highly stressed points that wisdom by the "fear of the LORD" teaches is the avoidance of the "strange woman" and illicit sexual relationships (Pr. 2:16-19; 5:3, 20; 6:20; 7:5, KJV). The first admonition (Pr. 2:16-19) presents itself as the second of three central themes emphasized in the beginning of the Book of Proverbs: the first theme emphasizes the avoidance of the "evil man" (Pr. 2:12-15), while the third theme emphasizes the need to "walk in the way of good men" (Pr. 2:20-22). Proverbs 4:20-27 implicitly teaches the avoidance of illicit relationships through the temperance of one's body, and Wisdom (personified as a woman) starkly contrasts the "strange woman" (Pr. 6-8). In fact, the avoidance of immoral women may have been a mo-

tivating reason to pen Proverbs 1:4: "To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion," especially in light of Proverbs 7:7, "And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding." Knowing then that the "fear of the LORD" involves avoiding such relationships, what does true religion (i.e., wisdom) teach concerning sexual relationships?

The "fear of the LORD" respects what God has established. In Genesis 2:20-25, the creation of woman is recounted. The reason for woman's creation stemmed from Adam's need for companionship. Thus, God created woman and gave her to Adam for a wife. Jesus reiterated this account in Matthew 19:4-6,


And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read,

<b>Marriage</b>	<b>Versus</b>	<b>Adultery / Fornication</b>
Common ethical code (Pr. 5:1-2; 31:26)	<b>-vs-</b>	Little or no ethical code (Pr. 6:26; 7:18-20)
Mutually exclusive (Pr. 5:15-17)	<b>-vs-</b>	Not mutually exclusive (Pr. 7:18-20)
Perpetual fulfillment (Pr. 5:18-19)	<b>-vs-</b>	Fleeting pleasure (Pr. 6:27-31)
Highly valued (Pr. 31:10-31)	<b>-vs-</b>	Little value (Pr. 6:26)
Creates peace (Pr. 5:18)	<b>-vs-</b>	Creates strife (Pr. 6:33-35)
Favor of the Lord (Pr. 18:22; 19:14)	<b>-vs-</b>	Wrath of the Lord (Pr. 2:16-19)
Favor of man (Pr. 31:23, 31)	<b>-vs-</b>	Wrath of man (Pr. 6:34-35)
Truthful (Pr. 31:11)	<b>-vs-</b>	Deceitful (Pr. 2:16; 5:3-4; 7:13-15)
Increased wealth (Pr. 31:13-24)	<b>-vs-</b>	Loss of wealth (Pr. 5:8-10)
Respectful (Pr. 18:22; 31:25-31)	<b>-vs-</b>	Shameful (Pr. 5:12-14; 6:32-33)

that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, <sup>5</sup>And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? <sup>6</sup>Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

God recognized man's need for woman and provided marriage as the only venue by which sexual relationships are to be enjoyed. God-ordained marriage based on Genesis 2:20-25 is a relationship that is monogamous (one man and one wife), supportive, interdependent, exclusively committed, and permanent companionship (Kenyon 5-6).

There is only one God-approved sexual relationship, and that relationship centers around the "fear of the LORD": "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall

be praised" (Pr. 31:30). Every marriage where both husband and wife fear the Lord with all their heart, soul, and mind, as they should, is a marriage that will continually reap God's blessings. Contrarily, any sexual relationship outside the husband-wife relationship brings disrespect to God and ultimately His wrath. Consider the table on the front page as it compares Marriage (God-fearing sexual relationships) to Adultery/Fornication (illicit sexual relationships) based on the wisdom of Proverbs. 

[Rick is a 2006 graduate of FSOP and preaches for the Thomsville, Georgia, church of Christ]

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# Why Marriage?

By Brian R. Kenyon

With our society's relentless push for same sex "marriage" and with the preference of too many couples for "cohabitation" instead of marriage, it is absolutely necessary that we understand the truth about marriage. On the sixth day of Creation, God ordained marriage, and it is to Moses' account of marriage that we must begin if we are to truly understand and appreciate this oldest institution of human history. While it is true that we cannot exhaust the mind of God nor figure out every reason God had for doing what He did, we can know at least three reasons why God instituted marriage.

## Mankind Needs Intimate Companionship

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. <sup>19</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. <sup>20</sup>And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. (Gen. 2:18-20)

God assessed, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (literally, "only himself") (Gen. 2:18-20). Man needed (and needs) a "help meet" ("answering to" ASVm). Man was in need of a suitable companion to cultivate and govern the earth (cf. Gen. 1:26), and to perpetuate the human race (cf. Gen. 1:28). The term "help meet [helper comparable, NKJ; helper suitable, NAS; helper fit, ESV]" refers to a help of his own like; a helping being in which as soon as he sees her, he will recognize himself (Keil and Delitzsch 86); a counter part to himself (Clarke 20). Adam could not find a suitable companion in anything yet created (Gen. 2:19-20). Adam named all the animals "but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him." Adam's companionship could not be found in the animal world. This reveals two significant truths: (1) there is a great gulf that exists between animals and human beings, who are created in the image of God; and (2) the man is incomplete without the woman.

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## Intimate Companionship Is to Be Found in the Opposite Sex

And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; <sup>22</sup>And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. <sup>23</sup>And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. (Gen. 2:21-23)

Since there was nothing in the created world to fulfill Adam's need for a help meet, God made (built) the woman from the man (Gen. 2:21-22). God's causing a "deep sleep" to come upon Adam is reminiscent of a seed that falls from a tree, goes into a deep sleep (through winter), and then, when the conditions are right, springs forth into new life! Such is the creative power of God! Adam did not see the woman until God presented her as his bride.

The fact that God made the woman from the side (rib) of man, but yet created man from the "dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:7), is significant. To be sure, men and women have different roles instrumentally (cf. 1 Tim. 2:8-15), but by nature they are equal (Gen. 1:26-27)! The woman possesses neither inferiority nor superiority, but is inherently equal to the man. "Eve was made, not from his feet to be trampled by him, or from his head to rule over him; but from his side, to be near his heart and loved by him" (Wiersbe). She was made to stand by the side of man. She was made for the man, not as a slave, but as his beautiful queen (DeHoff 14).

When Eve was brought to Adam by God, Adam immediately recognized the design of God in creating her! "Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" indicates that Adam recognized Eve as his same nature. She was nothing like he had ever seen before, yet at the same time, he recognized her as his perfect compliment (Gen. 2:23)! She was formed for an inseparable unity and fellowship of life with the man (Keil and Delitzsch 89). "Woman," the term Adam called Eve, simply means a "wombed man." Nothing in this world could have made an adequate help meet for the man—except the woman! Man and woman belong to each other. The woman is the "glory of man" (cf. 1 Cor. 11:7).

## Intimate Companionship Found in the Opposite Sex Is Only to Be Fulfilled in God-Ordained Marriage

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. <sup>25</sup>And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Gen. 2:24-25)

"Therefore," since the man and the woman were created to be intimately united, a special relationship must exist—marriage. This union is of a totally different nature than that of parents and their children. Marriage as God ordained is the deepest and the most spiritual union that can exist between human beings. Being "naked" in the Garden of Eden showed that Adam and Eve were in perfect peace and harmony (Gen. 2:25). This was prior to sin, and, thus, there was no reason to be ashamed. Shame only arises from a consciousness of sin (cf. Gen. 3:7-8), but no part of the human body had been improperly used at this time. Though this peace and harmony would soon be shattered by sin, God's intent for the home is that it should still be characterized by peace and harmony!

## Conclusion

Now, perhaps more than ever, we need to know and to be able to defend God's plan for marriage! Marriage between an eligible man and woman is what God designed. It is impossible for people of the same sex to be "married" and be pleasing to God! We must appreciate and respect His will and influence those whom we can to uphold it! 🙏

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